

# SOVIET AFFAIRS ANALYSIS SERVICE

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## Outline Of Reference Paper On:

### THE "TWO FACES" OF "SOVIET MAN"

Life in the Soviet Union makes it necessary for ordinary citizens to superimpose an "official face" on their real one, which betrays their thoughts about the Soviet system.

Articles in the Soviet press show that the Soviet leaders consider the two-faced attitude of the people a threat to the welfare of the state. The people with "two faces" are labeled "Philistines" and "double dealers" in the press.

Two-facedness in the Soviet man evolved in the 1920's as a survival adaptation to Stalin's regime of terror.

Today, the "two faces of Ivan" are most sharply drawn when some personal gain is involved. "Dishonest persons get on more easily in the world" is the attitude of young people in the USSR. The same attitude is typical also of the Soviet bureaucrats.

The concept of "two faces" is an insurmountable obstacle in the Communist personality transformation program. It reinforces doubts that the plan for the reorganization of Soviet society along Communist lines will ever be carried out.

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## THE "TWO FACES" OF "SOVIET MAN"

The current Soviet press furnishes many examples of the extent to which life in the Soviet state has forced most Soviet citizens, young and old, to assume two poses--the external, official one, modeled to meet the standards of "Communist morality," and the internal, real one, not for public display.

The Soviet leaders have every reason to fear this two-faced attitude of Soviet man. They accordingly condemn it as "double-dealing" and brand such Soviet citizens as Philistines (*meshchane*):

... A Philistine is dangerous most of all because he has many faces, many forms, and possesses a monstrous power of adaptability. In all complex social upheavals he attempts to put his head in the sand, to sit them out, to wait and see and then crawl out as if nothing has happened (*Ogonek*, Flame, No. 38, 1960).

The political chameleon established itself as a survival adaptation in the mid-1920s, when Stalin introduced a nation-wide system of terror, and repressive measures were taken not only against persons guilty of political crimes, but also against potential political opponents. From childhood on the Soviet man absorbs, as by osmosis, an awareness of the rules of so-called Communist morality. He learns how to juggle with this morality, to adapt himself, and to conceal his thoughts.

The Soviet leaders have been paragons of double-thinking and double-dealing to the Soviet people. The accusations of treason and espionage against such leading Communist revolutionaries as Trotsky, Kamenev and Rykov, the execution of Beria and the denunciation of Stalin are striking examples. Furthermore, the people almost developed a split personality in accepting the truth of such accusations. The "public face" conformed handily with the official view.

Fear of the Soviet punitive organs has diminished since Stalin's death, and the Soviet man now makes little attempt to conceal his two-faced makeup. Religious believers are no longer compelled to worship in secret; even Party and Komsomol members go to church. The youth criticizes the building of Communist society, and students often break Party taboos in art movements which fail to make the compromises required in the name of socialist realism.

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The "two faces" of the Soviet man are most sharply drawn when some form of personal gain is involved. The Communist labor brigades evolved a new type of young person, the "outstanding production worker," who makes speeches and appeals. His enthusiasm is intended only for show--he is motivated by a desire for personal gain. Such a Komsomol member is a familiar sight in the Soviet society today and is referred to with increasing frequency in the Soviet press. A sketch in Yunost (Youth) entitled "A Public Favorite" portrays the typical young and attractive Komsomol member and brigade leader who is popular with the factory managers and in public organizations. Externally he is an out-and-out Communist, "a marvelous worker, a public spirited fellow..." according to his associates. Yet this brigade leader is accused of using his friendship with the workers in the inspection department to have a shoddy product passed as fit for use. When a Komsomol member from his brigade criticizes his behavior, he is quoted as retorting: "Are we going to let that stop us all from getting a bonus at the end of the month?" (No. 10, 1960)

A different type of two-faced Komsomol, who also appears to be typical of Soviet society today, is the mileage cutter. He works as a driver. Whenever possible, he takes a short cut, adjusts his speedometer, and draws out the extra fuel. The attitude of his bosses has convinced him that honest work is not likely to lead him to success and promotion. He argues as follows about Soviet man's attitude toward Communism:

In general, man is a sluggish creature and thinks only of himself. He is not interested in others. That's how things are and will remain.... They do a lot of shouting about how we are building Communism, yet they themselves aim at grabbing as much as possible, at getting what they need as fast as possible, chargeable to the account of future Communism (Ibid.).

Examples showing the "two faces" of the so-called Communist "conscience" can be found in the No. 9, 1960 issue of Yunost.

There is the sergeant and Komsomol member, former member of a border unit, who has just been demobilized and has applied to join the Party. When he is asked at a Party meeting why he wants to join, he replies, "first, a Party member is trusted, and, second, it is then easier to find a good job." There is the local Soviet leader for whom the housing department is building a private house with state funds.

People see this taking place. They talk about it, they simmer--but quietly lest they be overheard and reported. The house has been brought up on numerous occasions in the Komsomol committee. "We ought to send a brigade to check," the committee members said. But it was not sent. The town newspaper says nothing--the editor is not a fool. "We young journalists try not to talk about it..." (Ibid.).

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The writer of the article comments that young persons have ready justifications for such views; "Dishonest persons get on more easily in the world... It is fun being dishonest... Conscience is a relative concept... Life tells us so...."

The same attitude is typical of Soviet bureaucrats. The top officials have a could-not-care-less attitude. If no personal gain is forthcoming, they are unwilling to do anything. "The difficulty is that you will not meet a person who will openly admit his indifference and his distrust of people. The bureaucrat today has learned to smile to callers and to say the right things." (Literaturnaya Gazeta, Literary Gazette, April 12, 1960). "This is what actually happens. A man has two faces, as it were. You do not recognize at once the mark of the cad. He can be clever, hide his second face" (Izvestia, September 4, 1960).

The Soviet Philistine is protean. He would stop at nothing to gain his ends and has no sense of duty to the state or to society:

The Philistine values only his own skill and is prepared to do anything for it. If he can steal without being caught, he will steal. If he has to praise honesty for his own ends, he will do so "with bloodshot eyes, with a face burning with fervor, he will weep and we will all sob." If he can get his neighbor in trouble without any danger to himself, he will do so. He may drag out a drowning person, if he... stands to gain from it.... A Philistine is like a trunk with a false bottom (Ogonek, No. 38, 1960).

The Soviet man's "two faces" and his animal ability to adjust himself to the situation at hand are insurmountable obstacles in the Communist personality transformation program. They raise doubts that the plan for the reorganization of Soviet society along Communist lines can ever be carried out.

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